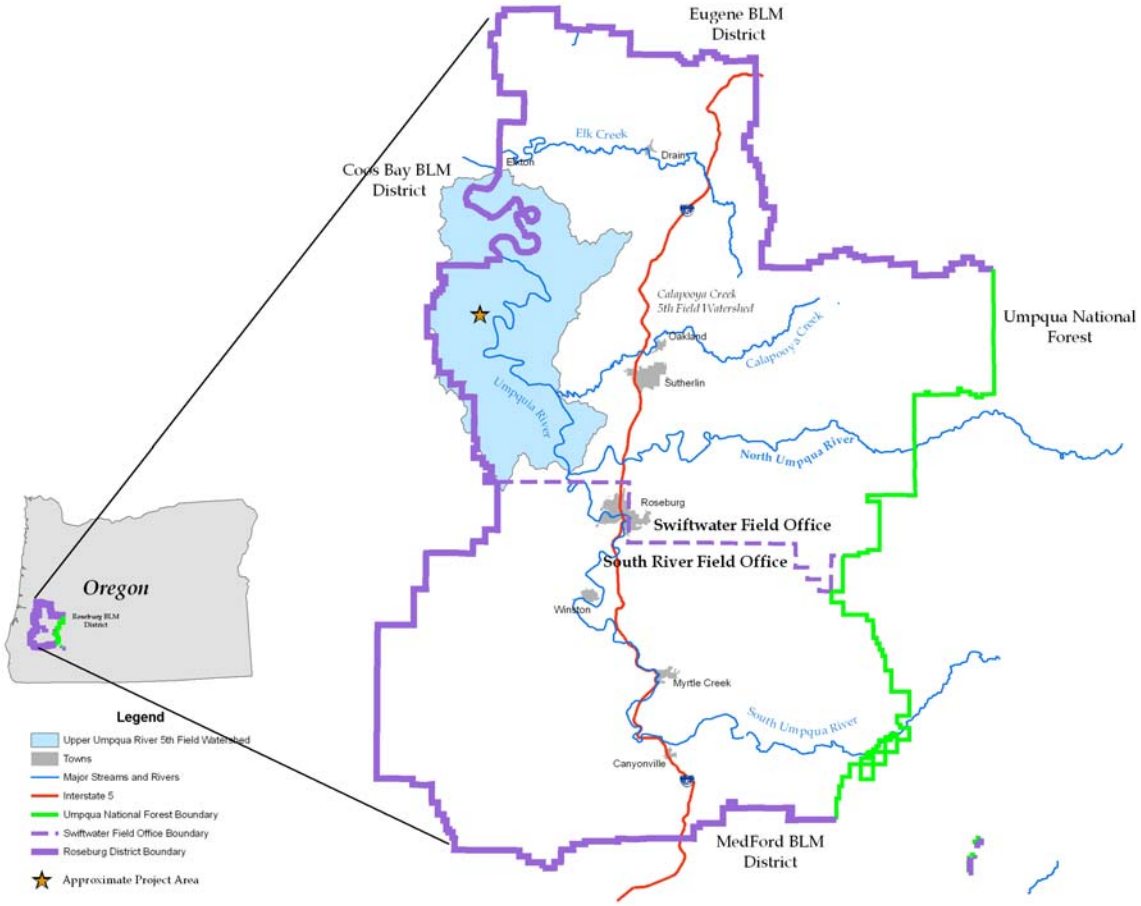
U.S. Department of Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Roseburg District, Oregon

Howling Wolf Density Management

Decision Document



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SECTION 1 – THE DECISION

Introduction

Howling Wolf is a forest density management project identified in the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan (EA # OR -104-02-09) and its subsequent Decision Record (October 8, 2003). This decision is consistent with the Roseburg District Resource Management Plan (RMP) adopted in June 1995 and the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan. The implementation of this decision will meet the following objectives from the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan (pg. 2):

- For mid seral forests on BLM lands designated for wildlife and fish needs (Late-successional and Riparian Reserves, Connectivity/Diversity Block), accelerate stand diversity and development of late-successional characteristics such as large crown ratios, larger lateral branches, multiple canopy layers, and a greater number of larger conifers while maintaining a healthy ecosystem.
- Accelerate and enhance the development of aquatic habitat characteristics such as instream structure, increased pools and gravels, and reduced bedrock dominated streams. Increase the access to spawning and rearing habitat for anadromous fish.

Decision

It is my decision to authorize implementation of the Howling Wolf density management timber sale in Sections 23, 25, and 35, T24S, R08W, W.M. following the project design features (PDFs) established in the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan as adjusted in the Decision Record. This timber sale is located on 123 acres within the Late-Successional Reserve (LSR) land-use allocation. The stands that will be treated are second-growth forest between 33 to 65 years of age with an average conifer diameter-breast-height (DBH) of approximately 12 inches. Howling Wolf will provide approximately 1,846 MBF of merchantable timber available for auction. It is estimated that an additional 92 MBF of timber will be removed under the density management timbersale contract as necessary for yarding corridors, tailholds, tieback, and guyline trees. This decision is subject to administrative remedy under 43 CFR § 5003.2 and 5003.3. Figure 1 and Tables 1, 2, and 3 provide a summary of forest treatments that are part of this project.

Table 1. Activity Summary Table

Activity		Total
Timber Harvest	Density Management	123 acres
	Clear Cut (Right-of-Way)	5 acres
Yarding	Cable	78 acres
	Ground Based*	45 acres

Hauling	Wet or Dry Season Dry Season Total Haul	4.3 miles 1.3 miles 5.6 miles
Road Activities	Temporary Road Construction Road Renovation Full Decommissioning Partial Decommissioning	0.7 miles 4.9 miles 0.6 miles 0.7 miles
Fuel Treatment	Hand Pile and Burn Machine Pile and Burn	16 acres 6 acres

*Up to 10 acres of additional, incidental ground-based logging could occur on areas designated for cable logging. This will include activities such as removal of guyline anchor trees and small isolated portions of the unit not readily yarded with a cable system.

Table 2. Silvicultural Prescription Summary Table.

Project Unit	**Acres**	**Silvicultural Prescription**		**Right-of Way Harvest** (acres)	**Existing Roads** (acres)
		Variable Moderate Residual Density (acres)	No Harvest Un-thinned Areas (acres)		
1	5	5	0	0.4	0
2	45	45	0.2	2.0	3.1
3	15	15	0	1.3	0
4	7	7	0	0	0
5	21	21	0	0.5	1.5
6	17	17	0	0.5	0
7	9	9	0	0.2	1.5
8	4	4	0	0	0.4
Total	123	123	0.2	4.9	6.5

Within harvest units, the following criteria are implemented to create variable stand density:

- Unthinned areas and varied densities within harvest units
  - Density management within the Late Successional Reserve has been marked as variable moderate-residual density to retain approximately 80-100 square feet of basal area.
  - High residual density thinning have been placed adjacent to contiguous blocks of existing late-successional habitat that are outside the harvest boundaries.
  - Variable no-harvest buffers have been placed around non-fish bearing streams. No-harvest means that some trees may be felled in these areas to create or enhance habitat but trees will not be commercially removed.
  - Prescriptions for tree marking have been designed to create variable spacing of remaining trees and protection of existing snags to the extent possible. Examples include occasionally leaving clumps of trees and clearing around large limbed trees, and varying the spacing to select a tree of particular species and/or growth form.

- The harvest methods that will be applied across the project area are presented in Table 3 "Harvest Operations Summary Table".

Table 3. Harvest Operations Summary Table.

Project Unit	Yarding Method		
	Aerial	Cable	Ground
1	0	5	0
2	0	32	12
3	0	3	13
4	0	7	0
5	0	8	13
6	0	17	0
7	0	6	3
8	0	0	4
Total	0	78	45

- Approximately 4.9 miles of existing roads (4.3 miles existing rocked roads, 0.6 miles natural surface roads and spurs) will be renovated and used for timber haul.

- Approximately 0.7 miles of temporary spurs will be constructed for timber haul.

- Approximately 0.6 miles of temporary spurs will be fully decommissioned by blocking (trench barrier), water-barring, mulching, and sub-soiling; at the conclusion of timber harvest.

- Approximately 1.6 miles of highly compacted skid trails will be fully decommissioned by blocking (trench barrier), water-barring, mulching, and sub-soiling; at the conclusion of timber harvest.

- Approximately 0.6 miles of existing roads and 0.1 miles of temporary spurs will be partially decommissioned by blocking (trench barrier), water-barring, and mulching at the conclusion of timber harvest.

- Approximately 4.3 miles of roads are designated as either wet or dry season haul and approximately 1.3 miles of roads and spurs are seasonally restricted for haul to the dry season.

- Approximately 16 acres will be hand-piled and burned within 50 feet of roads that have public access (road numbers: 24-8-25.5, 24-7-17.1, 24-8-25.1, 24-8-25.4, 24-8-25.2, and 24-8-35.1). This will be done to reduce the fuel loading near roads with public access.

- Approximately 6 acres will be machine-piled and burned at landing slash piles.

- Snags and coarse woody debris (CWD) will be retained or created as described in the Project Design Features.

Compliance and Monitoring

Compliance with this decision will be ensured by frequent on the ground inspections by the Contracting Officer's Representative. Monitoring will be conducted as per the direction given in Appendix I of the RMP (pgs. 189-209).

SECTION 2 – PROJECT DESIGN FEATURES

The following project design features and best management practices (BMPs) are adopted as part of the implementation of this decision to reduce adverse environmental impacts. They are designed to avoid, minimize or rectify impacts on resources. These measures will also help projects meet the objectives of the Aquatic Conservation Strategy.

Seasonal Restrictions

Seasonal restrictions will be applied based on consultation criteria to reduce impacts to federally listed species and in accordance with BMPs to reduce sedimentation impacts to aquatic species, and to reduce soil compaction in order to maintain soil productivity. These restrictions are further described below.

Project Design Features to Minimize Effects to Wildlife Threatened & Endangered Species

The following project design criteria from the Reinitiation of consultation on Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management FY 2005-2008 Management Activities (Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511 [June 24, 2005]) and the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan Decision Record (October 8, 2003) apply to the Howling Wolf density management decision:

- Bald Eagle
  There are no restrictions for bald eagles since there are no known bald eagle nest sites within 0.25 mile or 0.5 mile line-of-sight of the harvest units.

- Northern Spotted Owl
  Disturbance
  There are no disturbance restrictions for northern spotted owls since there are no known owl nest sites, known activity centers, or unsurveyed suitable habitat within 65 yards of the harvest units.
  - Howling Wolf is located in the Tyee Density Study Area, also known as the Roseburg Density Study area, (TDSA, Lint et al. 1999). Spotted owl surveys have been conducted in the TDSA since 1983 in support of various District-, Bureau-, and range-wide spotted owl conservation efforts. Current objectives for the TDSA include a complete annual census of spotted owls (USDA 1988). To meet this objective, the U.S. Forest Service Pacific Northwest Research Station (PNW) conducts yearly surveys according to the protocol described by Lint et al. (1999). Survey design is based on topography, prior spotted owl habits, knowledge gained from radio telemetry studies in the TDSA (Foster et al. 1992), and limitation of disturbance to established sites. There is no unsurveyed suitable spotted owl habitat in the TDSA because of this comprehensive, ongoing survey program.

- Prescribed burn plans scheduled during the nesting season and which would burn within 0.25 mile of known nest sites or activity centers will be designed to reduce or avoid disturbance and smoke impacts. There are currently no known spotted owl nest sites or activity centers within 0.25 mile of the harvest units.

➢ Marbled Murrelet

Disturbance

- This project is within the Marbled Murrelet Inland Management Zone 1 (within 35 miles of the coast). Activities will not occur within 100 yards of **any *known* occupied sites and unsurveyed suitable habitat** during the critical nesting period (April 1 - August 5). There are currently no occupied sites within 100 yards; but there is unsurveyed suitable habitat within 100 yards of Units 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8.
- Daily Operating Restrictions (activities must occur between two hours after sunrise and two hours before sunset) will be applied between August 6 and September 15 within 100 yards of **any *known* occupied sites and unsurveyed suitable habitat.** There are currently no occupied sites within 100 yards; but there is unsurveyed suitable habitat within 100 yards of Units 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8.
- No blasting will occur within 1 mile (for explosives greater than two pounds) or 120 yards (for explosives equal to or less than two pounds) of all unsurveyed suitable habitat between April 1 and September 15. There are currently no occupied sites within 1 mile; but all units are within 1 mile of unsurveyed suitable habitat and Units 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8 are within 120 yards of unsurveyed suitable habitat.
- Prescribed burn plans scheduled during the nesting season and which would burn within 0.25 mile of occupied sites or unsurveyed suitable habitat will be designed to reduce or avoid disturbance and smoke impacts. There are currently no occupied sites within 0.25 mile; but there is unsurveyed suitable habitat within 0.25 mile of units 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

Habitat

- In accordance with the Biological Opinions for activities on the Roseburg District (Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511), Residual Habitat Guidelines (from Appendix H of the Programmatic BO) will be implemented on this project. project design features for maintaining suitable habitat conditions include the following:
    - Residual trees within mid-seral stands and adjacent habitat have been evaluated on the ground to determine their relationship with the surrounding stand in order to adjust thinning prescriptions.
    - Trees with suitable structure(s) for murrelet nesting as defined in the Residual Habitat Guidelines will not be removed or damaged during thinning operations.
    - Thinning within 180 feet (one site potential tree height) of potential structure will protect and improve future habitat conditions. Thinning will aid limb development and the development of adjacent cover.

- One-quarter acre gap openings will not be created within 180 feet of potential structure.
- The proposed project will not remove or modify suitable habitat. Residual trees and adjacent suitable habitat will be buffered with high residual density thinning prescriptions to avoid modification of suitable habitat and to protect the integrity of the existing suitable habitat. Design features will take into consideration topography, aspect, site growing conditions, and local wind patterns. Design criteria for maintaining suitable habitat conditions include:
  1. Mid seral stands adjacent to suitable habitat will be treated to maintain interlocking canopies.
  2. Residual trees within mid seral stands will be evaluated on the ground to determine its relationship with the surrounding stand. Adjacent trees that directly contribute to the microsite conditions of suitable nest structures will be maintained.

- Snags will be retained or created in the following manner in accordance with the LSRA guidance:
  - Snags greater than 20 inches DBH and 16 feet tall were located and counted on a stand-by-stand basis. Currently, there are approximately 24 snags meeting the above criteria based on field surveys.
  - Tree marking was designed to protect existing snags to the extent possible.
  - Those that pose a safety concern will be cut and left for coarse woody debris (CWD).
  - If there are less than three snags on north slopes and one snag on south slopes, snags will be created on a per acre basis from the larger diameter class of existing live trees to meet the minimum interim needs. Based on these criteria, the harvest units have a current deficit of 109 snags. Therefore, 109 additional live trees will be girdled and recruited as snags.

- Within Late-Successional and Riparian Reserves, CWD will be retained or created in the following manner in accordance with the LSRA guidance:
  - All existing CWD will be retained.
  - Two trees per acre (246 trees) will be felled for additional CWD recruitment.

Project Design Features to Minimize Erosion and Sedimentation Effects to Aquatic Species

- To protect aquatic resources within riparian areas a variable width streamside no-harvest buffer has been established along all streams. In general, the buffer width is approximately 40 feet from the outer edge of the active stream channel for all non-fish bearing streams. The buffer width varies to include areas of instability, wide areas of riparian vegetation, or sensitive areas identified during site review. Variation in the non-fish bearing stream buffer was based on site level review of soils, hydrology, fisheries, vegetation, and riparian habitat:
  - Soil was reviewed for the presence or absence of steep slopes, potential erosion, sedimentation, and soil displacement issues.

- Hydrology was reviewed for overland and groundwater flow conditions (perennial, seasonal, ephemeral classification, wetlands, seeps, and springs).
- Fisheries was reviewed for the influence non-fish bearing streams have on downstream aquatic habitat.
- Vegetation was reviewed for diversity and crown characteristics (ground cover, vegetative composition, stream shading, etc).
- Riparian habitat was reviewed for the presence of key habitat components (aspect, vegetative composition and structure, snags, downed wood, etc).
- At the very minimum, one-tree retention has been maintained along the stream bank for bank stability. Minimum buffer widths have been used primarily on first or second order, ephemeral or highly interrupted intermittent streams, which lack riparian vegetation and where riparian habitat components, soil stability issues, and potential impact to downstream fisheries are also absent. Management within the buffer could include selected felling and/or girdling of trees where doing so will benefit riparian habitat. Trees will not be commercially removed from this buffer area.

- Stream channels and riparian habitat will be protected from logging damage by directionally felling trees, that are within 100' of streams, away from the streams and yarding logs away from or parallel to the streams. Because of the no- harvest buffers, yarding corridors parallel to non-fish bearing streams will be at least 40 feet away from the edge of the active streams.

- Skyline yarding is required where cable logging is specified. This method will limit ground disturbance by requiring at least partial suspension during yarding. In some limited, isolated areas partial suspension (outside no-harvest buffers) may not be physically possible due to terrain or lateral yarding. Excessive soil furrowing will be water-barred and covered with slash. For all cable yarding, corridors generally less than 15 feet in width will be utilized.

- The location of the previous failure on the 24-7-17.1 road and adjacent draw in Unit 2 are the only places in Howling Wolf identified as having the potential for debris flows that could reach a stream. To minimize the risk of landslides and debris flows, additional green retention trees were marked above the cut slope of the 24-7-17.1 road. In addition, the no harvest area east of Unit 2, PDFs (see below) limiting ground-based yarding to the dry season (generally May 15th – October 15th), and PDFs (see below) limiting timber hauling to periods that will not contribute sediment to streams will also help to minimize the risk.

Project Design Features to Minimize Effects of New Road Construction and Road Use

- **Temporary New Roads** – All new roads will be constructed in upland Late-Successional Reserves. No new roads will be constructed in areas exhibiting riparian characteristics. Roads will be available for use during the commercial harvesting contract. These roads will be decommissioned for hydrological purposes (as described on pg. 4) upon completion of the harvesting contract.

- The new road construction will be located away from streams and not present sedimentation risks. Roads will be located on ridge tops and or stable slopes that do not exceed 50 percent. All new road construction will occur during dry periods of the year, generally between May 15 and the onset of regular fall rains (typically October 15th) or as determined by weather patterns.

- Prior to the wet season, all new road construction not surfaced with rock will be water-barred and blocked to traffic during the same dry season as construction.

- Over-wintering an unsurfaced road for use the following dry season will be allowed in limited cases when the unit size and degree of seasonal restrictions make completing harvest within one dry season impractical. Over-wintering roads will also require water-barring and blocking to traffic and could include other measures listed above.

- All haul routes used during wet season hauling will be inspected prior to haul activities to assess the current conditions of those roads as they pertain to sedimentation concerns to adjacent streams. Where winter haul occurs along a gravel route with defined stream crossings, road design is either adequate or will be improved. Project design features that reduce sedimentation such as silt fences, gravel lifts, and weather dependant operation specifications are designed to prevent sediment contribution to live streams. Activities will be suspended when conditions are such that meaningfully, measurable stream-sedimentation will occur. The suspension will be lifted when conditions improve or remediation measures are implemented.

- Maintaining existing roads to fix drainage and erosion problems. This will consist of: replacing 36 existing culverts (33 cross drain and 3 stream crossing), installing an additional 2 cross drain culverts and replenishing road surface with crushed rock where deficient on 3.9 miles of the roads (24-7-17.1 [in part], 24-8-25.1, 24-8-25.2, 24-8-35.1, and 24-8-36.1 roads) (BMP II H; RMP, pg. 137). The additional culverts will reduce the effective stream extensions due to ditchline and associated sediment delivery.

Project Design Features to Maintain Soil Productivity

- Ground-based operations will only occur when soil moisture conditions limit effects to soil productivity (these conditions generally occur between May 15th and the onset of regular fall rains [typically October 15th] or may be determined by on-site examination).

- No ground-based or cable yarding will occur in or through the no-harvest buffers.

- Shovel yarders will walk over as much slash as can safely be negotiated, and avoid more than one pass in swinging logs and piling slash to roads or designated trails.

- Forwarder trails will be designated. Harvesters will de-limb in front of the machine tracks or tires in order to reduce compaction. The forwarder will operate on branch and limb covered areas traversed by the harvester.

- Main skid trails, landings and log deck areas will occupy less than 10 percent of the ground-based portions of the units. A main skid trail is defined as a trail in which duff and slash is displaced such that approximately 50 percent or more of the surface area of the trail is exposed to mineral soil.

- Skid trails which were created by prior entries will be reused to the extent practical. Such skid trails that are used will be included in the 10 percent limit of the ground-based portions of the units.

- Ground based operations will be limited to slopes generally less than 35 percent.

- To mitigate for soil compaction, approximately 0.7 miles of temporary spurs and 1.6 miles of skid trails will be sub-soiled.

- Burning of slash piles during the late fall to mid-spring season when the soil and duff layer (soil surface layer consisting of fine organic material) moisture levels are high (BMP III D1b, pg. 140) and the large down logs have not dried. This practice will protect the soil duff layer and down logs from being totally consumed by fire and the surface layer from being negatively altered (i.e., loss of organic matter, erosion, change of soil physical properties, alteration of soil ecology and soil nutrients).

Project Design Features to Minimize Effects from Noxious Weeds

- Project level weed surveys and watershed level weed inventories have been performed.

- Prior to ground disturbance, existing Himalayan blackberry and Scotch broom weed infestations within the project area will be treated.
    - Spurs 1, 2, & 3: Weed infestations were small and isolated, plants found were lopped and left on the site. These spurs will be monitored following the sale for the re-infestation of Scotch broom.
    - Spurs 4 & 7: Scotch broom infestations were approximately 0.25 – 3.0 acres in size and were mechanically removed January 2006. These spurs will be monitored following the sale.
    - Spur 5: Scotch broom infestation along most of its length. Scotch broom will be brushed out of the spur right-of-way, hand-piled, and burned to clear the way for temporary road construction. This spur will be monitored following the sale for Scotch broom.
    - West of Unit 2 there is a young stand (13 years old) that is heavily infested with Scotch broom and is scheduled for pre-commercial thinning in summer 2006. All Scotch broom is targeted to be cut in efforts to reduce the seed source in the local area.
    - East of Unit 3 there is a young stand (18 years old) with scattered pockets of Scotch broom. The portion of this stand that is adjacent to Unit 3 will be mechanically treated.

- Construction and logging equipment/machinery associated with ground disturbance will be cleaned prior to moving into the proposed project site to remove weed seed and help control or prevent the spread of noxious weed seed.

Miscellaneous Project Design Features

- **Hazardous materials** (particularly petroleum products) will be stored in durable containers and located so that any accidental spill will be contained. All landing and work site trash and logging materials will be removed. Equipment that leak hazard materials will not be allowed instream. Accidental spills or discovery of the dumping of any hazardous materials will be reported to the Sale Administrator and the procedures outlined in the "Roseburg District Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Emergency Response Contingency Plan" will be followed.

- **Cultural resources -** A cultural resource inventory was completed (SW0409). No resources were identified. Stipulations will be placed in the contracts to halt operations in the event of inadvertent discoveries of new cultural resource sites (e.g. historical or prehistorical ruins, graves, fossils or artifacts)

References

Foster, C. C., E. D. Forsman, E. C. Meslow, G. S. Miller, J. A. Reid, F. F. Wagner, A. B. Carey, and J. B. Lint. 1992. Survival and reproduction of radio-marked adult spotted owls. Journal of Wildlife Management 56: 91-95.

Lint, J. B., B. Noon, R. Anthony, E. Forsman, M. Raphael, M. Collopy, and E. Starkey. 1999. Northern Spotted Owl Effectiveness Monitoring Plan for the Northwest Forest Plan. General Technical Report PNW-GTR-440. USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, Portland, Oregon, USA. 43pp.

USDA. 1988. Study Plan: Demographic Characteristics of Spotted Owl Populations in the Oregon Coast Range and Olympic Peninsula of Washington. U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station, Portland, Oregon, USA. 16pp.

SECTION 3 – THE DECISION RATIONALE

This decision implements the guidance provided in the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan Decision signed October 8, 2003 for that portion of the plan covering the Howling Wolf project area. It incorporates the "adjustments made" as described in the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan decision (pgs. 3-9).

The PDFs listed above will minimize soil compaction, limit erosion, protect slope stability, protect wildlife, protect air and water quality, and protect fish habitat, as well as protect other identified resource values. I have reviewed the resource information contained in Table 4 "Summary of Effects of the Action" (below) and in Appendices A-L (attached). This decision recognizes that impacts could occur to some of these resources; however, the impacts to resource values will not exceed those identified in the *Final - Roseburg District Proposed Resource Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement* (PRMP/EIS). This decision provides timber commodities resulting from silvicultural treatments whose effects to the environment are within those anticipated and already analyzed in the RMP/EIS.

As a result of this decision, the density management actions that will be undertaken to accomplish terrestrial habitat objectives are only initial steps in a long-term process. This is an integral aspect of the adaptive management concept built into the Northwest Forest Plan and the RMP. The variable moderate-residual density thinning in the Howling Wolf project will develop late-successional characteristics more quickly which will in turn improve the quality of dispersal habitat for the spotted owl, as well as provide future nesting habitat for the northern spotted owl and marbled murrelet. It is expected that additional silvicultural treatments of the affected stands will be required at some point in the future in this long-term process to accomplish terrestrial habitat objectives. However, this decision neither determines the nature of those future actions, nor places constraints on them.

I have reviewed the public comments from the EA (see Section 4). My predecessor provided additional time for interested parties to develop input and to participate in a field tour of the project area. This interactive participation resulted in substantive adjustments in the proposed action initially presented in the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan EA. These adjustments were incorporated in the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan Decision signed October 8, 2003 and subsequently in the PDFs for this project.

The Swiftwater Field Office is aware of the August 1, 2005, U.S. District Court order in Northwest Ecosystem Alliance et al. v. Rey et al. which found portions of the *Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement to Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (January, 2004) (EIS) inadequate. The Swiftwater Field Office is also aware of the recent January 9, 2006, Court order which:

- set aside the 2004 Record of Decision *To Remove or Modify the Survey and Manage Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines in Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents Within the Range of the Northern spotted Owl* (March, 2004) (2004 ROD) and
- reinstated the 2001 *Record of Decision and Standards and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (January, 2001) (2001 ROD), including any amendments or modifications in effect as of March 21, 2004.

The order further directs "Defendants shall not authorize, allow, or permit to continue any logging or other ground-disturbing activities....unless such activities are in compliance with the provisions of the 2001 ROD (as amended or modified as of March 21, 2004)."

The litigation over the amendment that eliminated the Survey & Manage mitigation measure from the Northwest Forest Plan does not affect Howling Wolf Density Management. This is because biological surveys for Survey & Manage species meet the 2001 ROD as amended or modified as of March 21, 2004. Even though the Survey & Manage program had been eliminated, the Swiftwater Field Office conducted surveys (July 2005) consistent with Survey & Manage survey protocols.

The Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan EA (pg. 35) which was signed October 8, 2003 tiers to the 2001 EIS and identifies plan conformance with the 2001 ROD. The Swiftwater Field Office re-examined the individual project record for Howling Wolf in light of the Court ordered remedy. I have attached here the documentation of the wildlife and botany compliance reviews undertaken by this office with my concurrence and signature. The Swiftwater Field Office completed pre-disturbance surveys, equivalent-effort surveys, and management of known sites required by

protocol standards to comply with the *2001 Record of Decision and Standard and Guidelines for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measure Standards and Guidelines* (as the 2001 ROD was amended or modified as of March 21, 2004) for Howling Wolf Density Management.

There are no known Category B, D, E, and F species as identified in the 2001 ROD (as modified) within the Howling Wolf project area. Based on the survey results, there are currently no known sites of Survey & Manage species that require management within the project area.

Therefore, based on the preceding information regarding the status of surveys for Survey & Manage wildlife and botany species and the results of those surveys, it is my determination that the Howling Wolf Density Management project complies with the provisions of the 2001 ROD, as amended or modified as of March 21, 2004. For the foregoing reasons, this decision is in compliance with the 2001 ROD as stated in Point (3) on page 14 of the January 9, 2006, Court order.

SECTION 4 – PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

For the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan Environmental Assessment, comments were solicited from affected tribal governments, adjacent landowners and affected State and local government agencies. No comments were received from these sources. During the seventy-five day public review period for the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan, comments were received from four individuals or organizations. As previously described in Section 3, comments and subsequent interaction with the public helped formulate the Upper Umpqua Watershed Plan decision (October 8, 2003) and is reflected in both that decision (pgs. 3-9) and the PDFs for this project as described here (April 20, 2006)

No further comments or information have been received pertaining to the design of the Howling Wolf Density Management project.

SECTION 5 – PROTEST PROCEDURES

The decision described in this document is a forest management decision and is subject to protest by the public. In accordance with Forest Management Regulations at 43 CFR § 5003 Administrative Remedies, protests of this decision may be filed with the authorized officer [Marci Todd] within 15 days of the first publication date of the Notice of Decision in *The News-Review*, Roseburg, Oregon.

43 CFR 5003.3 subsection (b) states that: "Protests shall be filed with the authorized officer and shall contain a written statement of reasons for protesting the decision." This precludes the acceptance of electronic mail or facsimile protests. Only written and signed hard copies of protests that are delivered to the Roseburg District Office will be accepted. The protest must clearly and concisely state the reasons why the decision is believed to be in error.

Protests received more than 15 days after the first publication of the notice of decision/timber sale advertisement are not timely filed and shall not be considered. Upon timely filing of a protest, the authorized officer shall reconsider the decision to be implemented in light of the statement of reasons for the protest and other pertinent information available to her. The authorized officer shall, at the conclusion of her review, serve her decision in writing to the protesting party. Upon denial of a protest, the authorized officer may proceed with the implementation of the decision.

For further information, contact Marci Todd, Field Manager, Swiftwater Field Office, Roseburg District, Bureau of Land Management, 777 NW Garden Valley Blvd; Roseburg, OR. 97470, 541 440-4931.

_____ _____

Marci L. Todd, Field Manager Date
Swiftwater Field Office

Table 4. Summary of Effects of the Action: Howling Wolf Density Management.

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
Cultural Resources		
Cultural Resources.	Surveys were conducted for cultural resources and Section 106 responsibilities under the National Historic Preservation Act were completed, in accordance with the 1998 Oregon State Historic Preservation Office protocols. No cultural or historic resources were identified.	There will be no impacts to cultural or historical resources.
Botany & Noxious Weeds (refer to *Appendices B* and *K* for details)		
Federally threatened (FT) **Kincaid's lupine** and the federally endangered (FE) **rough popcorn flower**.	Surveys were completed (July, 2005) and no sites were discovered.	No impacts to these two federally listed plant species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.
Survey & Manage (S&M) Species.	There are two lichens and three vascular plant species that require surveys within the project area. Surveys were completed July 2005 and no sites of these, or any other, S&M botanical species were discovered.	There is no impact on S&M botanical species.
Bureau Sensitive (BS), Assessment (BA), and **Tracking (BT) Species**.	Surveys were completed (July, 2005) and no sites were discovered.	No impacts to BS, BA, or BT botanical species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.
Noxious weeds (i.e. Himalayan blackberry and Scotch broom) in the project area.	The project area is infested with Himalayan blackberry (approx. 32 acres) and Scotch broom (approx. 85 acres). The infestations are confined predominantly to adjacent, young stands (13-18 years of age) and along the temporary spur roads. The main roads throughout the project area were mechanically treated in January 2006.	The project area will be monitored for treatment effectiveness and follow up treatments will be conducted as necessary. The PDFs included in this project will minimize the spread of noxious weeds.
Fisheries (refer to *Appendix C* for details)		

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
Oregon Coast Coho Salmon (NMFS determined that the Oregon Coast coho ESU does not warrant listing under the ESA at this time and therefore withdrew the proposed listing [Fed. Reg., Vol. 71 No. 12, Jan. 19, 2006]). However, under OR/WA BLM guidelines, the coho is considered Bureau Sensitive.	Prior to NMFS's determination, the Roseburg District made a determination that this project will result in a "may effect, not likely to adversely affect [NLAA]" in a Biological Assessment (BA) prepared for consultation with NMFS.	Project will not adversely affect the Oregon Coast Coho Salmon.
Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for Coho Salmon and Chinook salmon.	Conservation measures incorporated into the PDFs will prevent adverse effects to EFH.	Project will not adversely affect EFH.
Bureau Sensitive (BS), Assessment (BA), and **Tracking (BT) Species**.	Umpqua Chub (BS) and Pacific Lamprey (BT) are suspected within the project area and Oregon Coast coho salmon (BS) and Coastal Cutthroat (BT) are documented.	PDFs will minimize soil erosion and sedimentation effects to aquatic species and aquatic habitat.
Hydrology (refer to *Appendix D* for details)		
Peak Flows within the Analytical Hydrologic Units (AHU).	Density management is not expected to have any measurable impact on peak flow within fish-bearing waters below the treatment areas. At the project level there may be increases in peak flows during smaller storm events (less than two year interval) in small non-fish bearing streams.	No measurable change in peak flows.
Sedimentation.	PDFs will minimize soil erosion and sedimentation effects to aquatic species and aquatic habitat. Sediment produced, as a result of haul, will be of such small magnitude that it would not be meaningfully measurable.	Sedimentation will be maintained below meaningfully measurable levels or haul will be suspended.
Soils (refer to *Appendix F* for details)		
Mass Wasting and **Landslides.**	The probability of landslides or mass wasting events will not be increased nor	The actions authorized under this decision do not change the probability of

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
	decreased by the project.	landslides or mass wasting events.
Soil Productivity.	It is estimated that there will be an effective net improvement to soil productivity by gaining approximately 0.2 acres of productive ground.	PDFs will maintain, if not slightly improve, soil productivity. Sub-soiling amelioration will accelerate the long-term recovery of soil productivity.
Wildlife (refer to *Appendices G, H, I, J, and L* for details).		
In accordance with the Endangered Species Act, **consultation** with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been completed for the federally threatened (FT) bald eagle, northern spotted owl, and marbled murrelet and for spotted owl critical habitat and murrelet critical habitat.	The Biological Opinion (BO) for the re-initiation of consultation on Roseburg District Bureau of Land Management FY 2005-2008 Management Activities (Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511) was completed June 24, 2005.	The BO rendered by the USFWS concluded that this action is " . . . not likely to adversely affect the bald eagle, spotted owl, spotted owl critical habitat, murrelet, and murrelet critical habitat" (pg. 30). PDFs will be implemented in compliance with the BO.
Bald Eagle.	No noise/visual disruption effects to bald eagles will occur due to this action since there are no known nests within 0.5 mile of the harvest units. Based on 2005 surveys, the nearest nest site (Tyee) is approximately 0.8 miles away. No suitable habitat will be removed or modified.	No disruption effects to bald eagles will occur and suitable nesting habitat will not be modified.
Noise/Visual Disruption of Northern Spotted Owl nesting behaviors.	No noise/visual disruption effects to spotted owls will occur due to this action since there are no known spotted owl nests, activity centers, or unsurveyed suitable habitat are within 65 yards of the harvest units.	No disruption effects to spotted owls will occur.
Northern Spotted Owl Habitat. There are five northern spotted owl sites located within 1.5 miles (Coast Range provincial home range) of the proposed harvest units.	Density management will degrade 123 acres of dispersal habitat but will not alter the ability of that stand to function as dispersal habitat. Since the treated stands will not be modified below 40% canopy cover, the stands will still	Treatment of the mid-seral stands will improve the quality of dispersal habitat within 5-10 years and will diversify the forest for spotted owl use by developing larger diameter trees with multiple canopy layers over the next 150 years.

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
	function as dispersal habitat. Two of the seven spotted owl sites affected by this decision, will concurrently be affected under the Mining Days Decision. Even though these two owl sites are having additional dispersal habitat degraded through a concurrent decision, that degradation will not reduce the ability of the dispersal habitat to function. No suitable habitat will be modified or removed.	Thus, this action will facilitate the development of late-successional characteristics, increasing the amount of suitable habitat available within each of the five owl sites earlier than through natural stand development. The USFWS concurs that this action is not likely to adversely affect spotted owls (pg. 19) [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511].
Critical Habitat for the Northern Spotted Owl. This project is within CHU-OR-58.	There are 26,724 acres of federally administered lands within CHU-OR-58, of which <1% (123 acres) will be modified by this decision.	The USFWS concurs that the density management activities will not likely adversely affect spotted owl critical habitat (pg. 28) [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511].
Noise/Visual Disruption of Marbled Murrelet nesting behaviors. The project area is located approximately 33-35 miles from the coast (within Zone 1).	There is unsurveyed suitable habitat within 100 yards of Units 2, 4, 5, 6, and 8. The harvest units are approximately 2.2 miles from the nearest known occupied marbled murrelet sites (Leonard Creek [MSNO-R3001] and Rattlesnake [MSNOR-3004]).	The PDFs will restrict disrupting activities so that this action will not disrupt marbled murrelet nesting. The USFWS concurs that the density management activities are not likely to adversely affect marbled murrelets (pg. 10) [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511].
Marbled Murrelet Habitat.	Suitable nesting habitat will not be removed within or adjacent to the project area. A 100ft light-treatment (high-residual retention) buffer will be maintained between adjacent suitable habitat and the treatment area. Within the stands prescribed for density	Density management will facilitate the development of future nesting habitat by increasing tree and limb growth rates; fostering the development of nesting platforms. In addition, thinning younger trees from around the older, large limbed trees will allow greater access for nesting providing an opportunity for murrelets to

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
	management under this decision, surveys for trees with suitable platform structures were conducted (May, 2005) and any found were tagged and marked for retention. Six potential nest trees were marked within the harvest units.	occupy these stands earlier. The USFWS concurs that the density management activities are not likely to adversely affect marbled murrelets (pg. 10) [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511].
Critical Habitat for the Marbled Murrelet. This project is within CHU-OR-04-e.	There are 53,097 acres of federally administered lands within CHU-OR-04-e, of which < 1% (123 acres) will be modified by the density management.	Density management will accelerate and enhance the development of late-successional stand characteristics as discussed previously. The USFWS concurs that the density management activities are not likely to adversely affect marbled murrelet critical habitat (pg. 16) [Ref. # 1-15-05-I-0511].
Survey & Manage (S&M) Species.	There are no S&M wildlife species that require surveys within the project area. There are no known sites of S&M wildlife species within the project area.	There is no impact on S&M wildlife species.
Fringed myotis (Bureau Assessment) and **Townsend's big-eared bat** (Bureau Sensitive).	Residual late-seral/old-growth trees present in the units possess the deeply furrowed bark and deformities that make them suitable bat roosts. Survey results indicate that there are also approximately 0.2 conifer snags/acre $\geq$ 20 inches dbh and > 16ft tall in the harvest units (field review May-Sept. 2005) which are assumed to be suitable for bats. It is unknown if the Townsend's big-eared bat or the fringed myotis is present within the harvest units because these bats may roost high within the canopy so surveys are not practical.	It is unknown how many (if any) suitable bat roost trees are actually occupied. Existing snag habitat is expected to be retained in the harvest units due to the protection afforded them by the PDFs. Additionally, green trees retained as part of the density management prescription will serve as future recruitment for bat habitat as the trees develop late-successional characteristics.

Context (What?)	Intensity (How Much?)	Reason for not being Significant.
Remaining **Bureau Sensitive** (BS) and **Bureau Assessment** (BA) Species.	Evaluation of the remaining BS and BA wildlife species was completed in December 2005 and no known sites or concerns were identified (except for the fringed myotis and Townsend's big-eared bat as discussed above).	No impacts to the remaining BS or BA wildlife species will occur since there are no known sites within the project area.
Bureau Tracking (BT) Species.	There are detections of four BT species in the project area including: (1) clouded salamander, (2) long-legged myotis, (3) red-legged frog, (3) sharp-tailed snake, (4) Yuma myotis.	Districts are encouraged to collect occurrence data on BT species but they will not be considered as Special Status Species for management purposes (IM-OR-2003-054).